

The Institution of Engineers, Australia: Sydney Division
Engineering Heritage Committee

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEWEE: **Bruce Loder**

TAPE NUMBERS: IEA:SYD FH36 to FH39

INTERVIEWER: **Frank HEIMANS**

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INTERVIEW TAPE LOG

Tape: IEA SYD: FH36 Side A

TAPE COUNTER	SUBJECT	NAMES & KEYWORDS
007	Start of Tape	
012	Bruce Norman Loder, former Commissioner of the Department of Main Roads. Born 3rd November, 1926 in Sydney – Depression years Father: Arthur Bruce Loder (born Singleton) Educated Gladesville public school & Putney Public School & Sydney University (Hons – Civil Engineering)	Born 1926 Education Gladesville P.S. Putney P.S. Sydney University
033	Earliest memories include a bungalow at Hunters Hill until 5 years old. Moved, due to depression to Ryde. Discusses readjustment required to fit in new (working class) area. Discusses Ryde community – English immigrants working on Sydney Harbour Bridge, later affected by unemployment and poverty during the Depression.	Ryde Hunters Hill Sydney Harbour Bridge

064	Describes how Depression affected his family. Father worked on trams – working week and pay cut short and mother struggled to look after family. Brother 8 years older left school at Intermediate level to take public service job – unable to take follow a career in medicine. Two sisters also left school at Intermediate level, due to economic circumstances. Loder too young to realise the situation at the time.	Depression Family
088	Talks about his father's background. Left the country to go the WWI and was very sick during the post-war influenza epidemic. Asthma and bronchitis left him unable to work around stock, so went to the city. Failed business dealings meant he lost his capital and his house and he went to the trams – a traumatic step downwards. Family still managed holidays once a year up North Coast due to railways holiday pass. Would walk with luggage a mile and a half to save bus fare.	Father WWI North Coast holidays
120	Memories of Fort Street Boys High School, a prestigious selective school – top academically in the State. Neville Wran was a year ahead, Bob Ellicott later MP & QC was in the same class. Remembers Wran as average, personable – played in the same football team. Wran wasn't much good academically, while Loder says he was a good runner and tackler. Loder played above his size and Wran below. Says Neville Wran was a good actor and starred as key character in school play "X equals 0" reviewed by someone from W C Williamson's. Wran was also a great debater at school.	Fort Street High School Neville Wran Bob Ellicott

170	Discusses Bob Ellicott at Fort Street High School. A country boy - lovely fellow, honest and clever. He was class captain and Loder deputy class captain. Classes graded; 1D the top, then 1B & 1C both ungraded. Ellicott, a country boy was in 1B with Loder. Loder, Ellicott and two others were promoted to top class the following year. Three of the four went to the headmaster, Charles Christmas (Father Christmas as he was known) to ask to be kept with 1B and were allowed to. Discusses 2B's sporting abilities and spirit and academic success in matching the D class. Talks about the A class – the commercial class.	Fort Street High School Bob Ellicott The B Class Charles Christmas, Headmaster
229	Talks about subjects at Fort Street: English, Maths, History, French, Latin, Geography. Enjoyed languages. Loyalty to his B classmates and social activities remained with this group.	Fort Street Subjects Loyalty
256	Describes an early interest in Engineering which started with bridges. Intended early on to go into engineering and took science subjects with this in mind.	Engineering
286	Remembers teachers at Fort Street High School. Headmaster, Mr Johnstone, English Teacher; Mr Dunne, Latin teacher; Mr Simpson maths teacher, Vic Outten maths teacher – top of their profession in the public school system and stayed for many years.	Fort Street teachers Charles Christmas Mr Alex Johnstone Mr Dunne Mr Simpson Vic Outten
305	Mentions his parent's support and pride when he won the scholarship to Fort Street High.	Scholarship
315	Discusses entering Sydney University during war years. His Leaving Certificate pass gained at Fort Street entitled him to study any course at University. Forty percent didn't make it to fourth year due to tough requirements relating to passing courses.	Leaving certificate Sydney University War time

353	Refers to the war years and his brother being killed. Air force reported him missing on Christmas Eve 1943 and mother never got over it. Thereafter Christmas not celebrated in the same way. Brother good natured, clever and was like a second father, due to being eight years older and matured by the Depression. Affected his Maths marks in the Leaving Certificate at that time.	War years Brother's death
395	End side A	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH36 Side B

000	Start Side B, IEA SYD: FH36	
005	Discusses memories of studying civil engineering at Sydney University. Began in 1944. First two years a general course for all engineers and in Year Three specialised. *Played inter faculty Rugby Union as only extra curriculum activity. Allowed only one or two "posts" ie failures per year.	Sydney University Activities
038	Missed some of first term with peritonitis. Difficult and critical exam in descriptive geometry. Professor 'Willie' Miller offered to coach him, but he refused the offer. On announcing results said that Loder had "failed with distinction"	Prof W. N. 'Willie' Miller
068	Mentions Lecturer Charlie Grey (third and fourth year) a brilliant engineer, but a poor communicator.	Lecturer Charlie Grey
070	Returned servicemen rejoined university engineering courses, including Governor Rowland. Charlie Gray would check maths as written on board with student, Milton Chappell, who topped University maths both in first and second year.	Students: Governor Rowland and Milton Chappell

087	Compulsory subjects for engineering in first year – maths, physics and chemistry, chemical engineering, workshop practice, drawing office practice, descriptive geometry. Differed slightly in second and third year.	Subjects
097	Visiting lecturers from the Department of Main Roads. Cecil Hawkins who took Road Engineering and Howard Sherrard who took Town and Country Planning. Loder topped both subjects in fourth year, which brought him to their attention before and during his career at DMR. Lecturer in Surveying was Dr Ashton. Loder won the Craig Memorial Prize in Surveying.	Lecturers: Cecil Hawkins Howard Sherrard Dr Ashton Craig Memorial Prize
122	In 1950 left the Department for 18 months to broaden his experience overseas. Howard Sherrard wrote a letter of high recommendation indicating that Loder had come to the attention of the Department of Main Roads. Later in Division in Goulburn, when Commissioner Howard Sherrard visited, he called into Loder's office first and addressed him by his first name.	Early recognition at DMR Howard Sherrard
143	Followed Vince O'Grady as executive engineer of National State Association of Australian State Road Authorities on secondment. Feels Hawkins and Sherrard were instrumental in his selection.	Vince O'Grady
149	Said interest in Main Roads was by default. Third year university required six months work experience. Approached Hydro Electric Commission in Tasmania by letter ordinary mail which didn't arrive in time. So took a vacant position at DMR. Graduated post war and due to people shortages, several offers were made including Queensland Irrigation Commission who sent telegrams offering interviews to everyone in the civil engineering course. One student later became Commission of Queensland Irrigation Commission.	Hydro Electric Commission. Graduation. Queensland Irrigation Commission

181	Discusses his early days at DMR, a new organisation in the WW1 post war period. Many employees had military backgrounds. Work included construction, planning and design. The organisation suited and was structured as a benevolent military hierarchy. Engineers bonded well and regarded as a "superior race". Loder's first job was in the bridge section. During six months at a works office surveyed, spent time at a construction office and on bridge construction.	1950s Type of organisation Early jobs Bridge Section
229	During this post war period the DMR was employing "displaced persons" from Europe. Loder was in charge of thirty workers in a camp at Bathurst. They caught a train to Bell and were taken by truck to camp at Cut Rock. A pregnant woman arrived with her husband and was unable to stay at the camp, so hotel accommodation and a cleaning job was arranged.	Bilpin Bell "displaced persons"
288	Talks about the aesthetics of bridge design. Efforts were being made to improve the appearance of bridge structures and after this project the Department consulted with a professional architect. Agrees that more attention was given to integrating bridges into the landscape during the 1950s.	Bridge design
318	Says that if a tree was taken down unnecessarily within the road reserve, it would almost mean instant dismissal.	Environmentally conscious
334	A bridge at that time was the shortest possible, most economical structure possible. They were the very early days of pre-stressed concrete.	Bridge design Pre-stressed concrete
349	Had an aversion to bridge design, as more interested in preliminary – big picture planning and hands on, but not detailed planning. Was socially friendly with people in the Bridge section, including Eric King.	Bridge section Eric King

389	Remarks that not much notice was given when being given a job and you were sent where the Department had vacancies. When Loder arrived at the Bells Line of Road Project (between Kurrajong and Bell) most of the earthworks were completed.	Bells Line of Road Project
420	Comments that most roads in NSW were gravel and that sections of the Pacific Highway were unsealed until the late 1950s.	Gravel roads
428	Job on Bells Line of Road classified as Assistant Engineer – a Grade 3 Engineer, the lowest grade. Job title was not well regarded by those in it. An even lower and unqualified position was Engineering Assistant.	Job Grade
459	Tape IEA SYD: FH36 Side B ends	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH37 Side A

000	Tape IEA SYD: FH37 Side A begins	
005	Remembers fondly his early days with DMR. Says it was a good life and like being part of a family, particularly when moving around the country. In 1951 was Works Engineer at Bega. Married in Bega. There were no major contractors or material suppliers – the Department supplied everything: crushed aggregate for the road, had sawmills for bridge timber, gravel pits, did spray sealing and provided construction crews. All bulk materials came in through Tathra, as roads were poor but improved during that time.	1951 Bega Tathra

039	Worked at Bega with Pat Schmidt and became family friends. Also Divisional engineer Ray Hirt, now deceased. Russell Thomas was supervising engineer and Bob James was an assistant and still a friend. Russell Thomas and Pat Schmidt also became eventually Commissioners.	Bega Pat Schmidt Ray Hirt Russell Thomas Bob James
064	Appointed First Assistant to Officer in Charge and eventually Officer in Charge. A requirement was that he hold an acting rank above this position and be paid an allowance. Rather than pay an allowance they put the Works Engineer at Windsor office in charge also and Loder was deputy at the Bilpin outpost.	Bilpin Officer in Charge
086	Illustrates the Department's attitude to having to pay out extra money. As Works Engineer at Bowenfels later, he lived during the week in a boarded tent. One Monday noticed some personal items missing and reported to divisional office, who were very guarded until Loder said he was not after compensation.	Money Bowenfels
102	After returning from overseas he went to divisional office in Goulburn and eventually became Executive Engineer of the National Association of Australian Road Authorities (NAASRA) and went back to Head Office and out of the country circuit.	Goulburn NAASRA

109	Arrived in U.K. and had a one month's orientation around the country. Took a position as Supervising Engineer with the Air Ministry on airfield reconstruction. Upgraded three air fields to make them suitable for B29 bombers. Based at Upper Hayford during the height of the Korean war. Orders came to cease construction works and make the airport operational. American army trucks appeared outside the administration office waiting on orders to load bombs onto B29s which could bomb Moscow. Resigned to tour Europe with Australian friends fearing WW3 outbreak and recruitment into the forces. On return to UK employment difficult to obtain and returned to Australia. In the UK gained excellent engineering experience, although was unimpressed with some senior English engineers who regarded Australians as colonials and were condescending to a degree.	U.K. Air Ministry Korean War B-29 Bombers Moscow
191	On return to Australia worked for the Snowy Mountains Authority. Was based in Sydney in the Municipal Engineering Section, designing towns like Guthega, but was unable to get a country posting, so resumed career with DMR.	Snowy Mountains Authority Guthega
207	First posting with DMR was at the Chatswood Divisional office and then to Bega as a Grade Two engineer in charge of the Works Office. Met wife Beryl Schafer, a nursing sister and local at a dance at Tathra.	Chatswood Bega Marriage Beryl Schafer

251	The next posting was a four year posting at Goulburn at the Divisional Office in 1954. Lived with his new wife in a Departmental house. The path to promotion involved a circuit of country postings. Ken Jordan was in charge of the Goulburn office and looked after the works officers. Loder worked as a grade two engineer looking after half the division and the bridge maintenance and Pat Schmidt from Bega was the Supervising Engineer and looked after the other half of the council.	Goulburn Ken Jordan Pat Schmidt
317	Arrived at the office before the 8.30am starting time, as had to sign on. A car would be taken home the night before if the day was to be spent in the field or a driver would call for you. Field work often meant leaving much earlier, depending on the distance involved.	Typical day in Goulburn
347	A major project at Goulburn was the construction of the Hume Highway both north and south of Goulburn. Also some work on the Federal Highway to Canberra and all the councils had construction programs underway. Was mostly involved with a sealing program on the Canberra to the Coast road going through Talaganda and Yarralumla shires.	Hume Highway construction
359	Agrees that the late 1950s were a major period of road construction in New South Wales due to Commonwealth involvement. There were shortages. Works programs were boosted to accommodate returned servicemen. Car registration was increasing and money was becoming available. Costs were reasonable due to lack of inflation.	Late 1950s Shortages

394	In the early sixties went to NAASRA – for approximately four years. Took over from Vince O'Grady as Executive Engineer. Role involved working with top people in every field in every state. Committee meetings, bridge design and construction, traffic engineering, road construction, standards committees and programs between the state. Committees included the Administrative and Accounting, Advanced Planning, Traffic Engineering, Road Construction, Bridge Construction and Maintenance and Design, Bituminous Materials. Learned about and rubbed shoulders with experts in every facet.	NAASRA, now Austroads Committees
457	Tape IEA SYD: FH37 Side A ends	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH37 Side B

000	Tape IEA SYD: FH37 Side B begins	
007	Discusses that NAASRA was formed to control the technical meetings of each state road authority. Its aim was to coordinate standards for the different state road authorities, their construction programs and research. Funded by payments from each state road authority, the largest being NSW. Loder was on secondment under the guidance of the Engineer in Chief in DMR, NSW. Details his role at NAASRA.	NAASRA's aims and role
032	Talks of the far reaching career benefits of his involvement in NAASRA. Years later realised his contemporaries were ignorant of some functions of road engineering which he had gleaned during the period with NAASRA. Benefits included a higher level of competency and confidence and mixing with senior department circles. Challenging and enjoyable.	NAASRA – career benefits

054	NAASRA started the Australian Road Research Board. After an initial meeting Loder and his assistant prepared draft minutes with difficulty for the next day's meeting. Warned Howard Sherrard that minutes were a broad interpretation. Sherrard asked the meeting for quick acceptance of the minutes and that was the beginning of the Australian Road Research Board. Organisational politics of NAASRA required that a cooperative approach was taken.	The Australian Road Research Board
106	Sherrard was not well liked by many staff. On his retirement a celebration was held by senior staff and Sherrard was not invited. A great engineer, but frugal and consequently unpopular. Was hard on people who made mistakes but good to immediate staff. He called only two people in his department by their first names – Claude Gittoes and Bruce Loder. At one stage Loder worked until midnight three nights in a row and was concerned about transport home. Deputy Commissioner John Shaw organised a driver for Loder. Sherrard questioned Shaw about this at the car and as it drove off Loder looked back and saw the two arguing on the kerbside.	Commissioner Sherrard
160	Discusses NAASRA's major achievement as giving a national approach to roads - setting up of the Australian Roads Research Board; the coordination of designs of standards, development of various expert conferences and training and spread of skills throughout the Department and courses for overseas engineers. Published standards guides.	NAASRA's major achievements
179	Says prior to NAASRA there was no consistent national approach to roads. Each state had its own weight limits and Loder prepared a guide for a study on axle limits. Was responsible for producing the methodology for conducting the study on which national uniform standards for weights of trucks are based. This now relates to a federal tax on trucks.	Uniform standards for weights of trucks.

204	Talks about being transferred in 1964 to Senior Supervising Engineer, Metropolitan. Would have been second in charge at Milsons Point but at the time Metropolitan Division also had a number of major bridge works at Gladesville, Taren Point, Roseville and also Warringah Freeway, so put a senior person of divisional engineer rank as assistant to the Metropolitan engineer. and so that person was second in charge. Loder's role at Milsons Point was unique and he was running traffic as well as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and looking after the councils.	Senior Supervising Engineer, Metropolitan Division
233	Discusses his role in major bridge projects of the 1960s: Gladesville, Tarban Creek, Captain Cook and Figtree. Handled all the traffic side, including the lighting. This was the first time DMR was involved in street lighting. Gladesville bridge was over bright: the first night the lights were switched on they could have been playing tennis there and it was brighter than the Sydney Harbour Bridge.	Major 1960s bridge projects. Lighting.
245	Talks about Sydney Harbour bridge traffic control. Had tidal flow - ie had more lanes open to cope with traffic during peak hour – am and pm. Traffic lanes were separated with flaps – big leather constructions like a T which were dropped on the road by a tow truck crew. Also operated a similar system on Gladesville and Spit bridges. The crews also towed broken down vehicles to maintain traffic flow. Enjoyed traffic engineering.	Harbour bridge traffic Tow truck crews Lane dividers

279	In 1967 Loder went to Bourke and before that time completed Sydney University Diploma in Town and Country Planning. Topped the class each year and won both Town Planning Association prize and the Town Planning Department prize. Regarded town planning an important part of road planning. Howard Sherrard wrote a book on town planning and lectured in the subject to engineers and was instrumental in commencing the course at Sydney University. Sherrard recruited Professor Dennis Winston, first Head of Cumberland County Council. Sidney Luker was a Main Roads engineer. John Brunt was a year ahead in the same course.	Town and Country Planning course. Howard Sherrard Prof Dennis Winston Sidney Luker John Brunt
315	Position at Bourke was as Divisional Engineer, one of the three peak jobs at the DMR. During that time four highways were under construction. Stayed for eighteen months. Politicians had made promises to seal highway to Adelaide and DMR was unable to meet deadlines which necessitated a massive increase in funding to meet deadlines. Family did not enjoy Bourke. Level of schooling was lower and caused problems with his daughter. Wife Beryl did not enjoy the rough and tough atmosphere, felt isolated and found the need to mix with all sections of the community difficult.	Bourke
412	Tape IEA SYD: FH37 side B ends	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH38 Side A

000	Tape IEA SYD: FH38 Side A begins	
011	Looks back on the time spent at Bourke and doesn't remember it with great fondness.	Bourke
021	Returned to Head office in Sydney as Assistant Urban Investigations Engineer to the retiring Urban Investigations Engineer, a sideways move but still a career move. Urban Investigations involved the planning for the road network in the metropolitan and Greater Sydney area – west to Mt Victoria, south to Dapto and north to outside Newcastle. Did layout maps, preliminary designs, protected reservations from development, planning for freeways and county roads.	Assistant Urban Investigations Engineer
045	Talks about major project at that time, including M2 freeway, known at the time as F2. Looked at the possibility of a second harbour crossing and was also involved in continual development on the county road system.	Significant UI projects
056	Key responsibilities were drawing up the plans and protecting the land. Would buy land and houses affected by planning at market price. Consequently, DMR owned a lot of property – perhaps the biggest landlord in Sydney. No one was actually forced to sell, but most did because road planning devalued land/property prices. Mostly acquired vacant land.	Land acquisition
085	Talks about Mona Vale Road and Ryde Road planning projects. An owner on Ryde Road insisted the DMR buy his property and asked to be a tenant until it was required. DMR adjusted the property to suit the road building but when the tenant asked to buy it back he could not afford to buy it, to due to increased property values.	Mona Vale Road, Ryde Road

117	When a property owner at Seaforth refused to sell, the house title was passed to the DMR. That freeway route was eventually abandoned. Years later he still lived there, but had not paid any rent and he wanted to buy his house back. The house had increased significantly in value. Loder is unsure if the problem has been resolved to this day.	Seaforth land acquisition
156	Next step in his career was as Advanced Planning Engineer. Advanced Planning was a mixed function created by Vince O'Grady. It included investigative work about the life of pavements and studies to find out what was needed to bring road systems up to the required level. The development of a system for recording data for roads was a major project. A major breakthrough at an international level involved digitising the road system using national coordinates as reference points. Prior to that, fixed points were established.	Advanced Planning Section.
188	Moved to Wollongong for eighteen months and lived there during the week. Did not want to move, as son was about to do HSC. Stayed about three or four years overall. Took on the position of Divisional Engineer, the most senior role of his career to date.	Wollongong
202	Talks about the hierarchical structure of the DMR and agrees that it was very compartmentalised. Run on military lines with the Commissioner as Commander-in-Chief whose word was law and who was revered by staff more highly than the Minister. Says no one has that kind of power today and even then it was in decline. Says that if the power had been exercised improperly it would have been taken away immediately. Commissioners had a great deal of influence over the Minister - however, the Commissioner was subject to the direction of the Minister. Loder dealt with seven ministers and never had a problem. Heads of departments kept out of politics.	DMR structure State Ministers for Roads

247	Says that Ministers did not come into the decision making process until Laurie Brereton arrived. Remembers Pat Hills as an excellent Minister, who left the running of the department to the Commissioner. During the time of Commissioner Russell Thomas, Pat Hills was instrumental in having South Dowling Street moved into the Lakes Golf Course instead of an old residential area, which would have displaced his constituents. A political decision and in terms of dollars, a very costly one. Says that Russell Thomas was the most political commissioner ever. Pat Hills turned up to a site appointment early and had to wait for Commissioner Loder. Loder felt embarrassed because he kept a Minister waiting. Hills said he would not be early again.	Laurie Brereton Pat Hills Commissioner Russell Thomas South Dowling Street
312	Talks about the first appointment in the re-elected Wran Government being the Minister for Roads, Paul Whelan. Says he was inexperienced but easy to work with and left the department to run things. Gerry Gleeson, Head of the Premier's Department said Whelan should have an office in the DMR. Whelan wanted to keep his own office and did, but an office was provided at the DMR which he never used. During this time Treasury and Gerry Gleeson were trying to curtail the powers of the commissioner who was uniquely powerful and who, at that time was the only person in government service who could accept a tender anywhere in the world for any amount without consultation	Wran Government Paul Whelan Gerry Gleeson
358	Talks about Vince O'Grady making a public statement that did not go down well politically with Minister Whelan. The minister phoned Loder and asked him to bring O'Grady over. Said to Vince – you're old enough to be my father, I'm not going to say anything to you but don't do it again.	Minister wraps O'Grady over the knuckles

374	Relates that the most colourful minister was Laurie Brereton. He did not always confide in and inform the Commissioner, which sometimes caused difficulties. Was high up in the Cabinet and if you got him on side, things went well. Sydney Harbour Tunnel was due to Laurie Brereton's efforts. There was a lot of opposition in the DMR to the proposal. The Depoartment had ideas of augmenting the Harbour Bridge - a band aid solution. Neville Wran wanted to do something and Laurie Brereton wanted to do anything that Wran wanted, which set the scene. Loder as Commissioner wanted to do something, but his deputy considered it to be a waste of money. Loder felt it too good an opportunity to miss.	Minister Laurie Brereton Sydney Harbour Tunnel
410	End of side A – Tape IEA SYD: FH38	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH38 Side B

000	Start of side B – Tape IEA SYD: FH38	
006	Discusses pressure to improve conditions across the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Wran and Brereton were both keen to act. Proposals were called for and submitted. but were politically unacceptable. The location of a second bridge would be hard to sell politically and environmentally. Wran asked Loder for a solution but there was none. Transfield thought of putting a tunnel from Warringah Freeway, where it would present few political problems, and go across parallel with the Bridge. It was not quite what was wanted but on the right track. DMR said they would consider the proposal if it was changed to the Cahill Expressway option. It looked costly but possible to get off the ground.	Sydney Harbour Tunnel Options Transfield

055	Says that the Sydney Harbour Tunnel project was not a project the Commissioner could have got up and only existed through the determination of Minister Brereton. Mentions that he was Commissioner when contracts were signed for the tunnel project but had retired before the tunnel's completion.	Contracts
060	Discusses returning to Sydney after Wollongong to head an internal review committee working with D W Scott. Over about twelve months the Committee reviewed the Department and senior structure. Commissioner Pat Schmidt retired and Loder applied to become Deputy Commissioner.	Internal review committee D W Scott Pat Schmidt
081	Says that the internal review was based on unhappiness in the service due to the autocratic management style and government's wish to curtail the Commissioner's powers and modernise. Feels that at times things went too far, but that there was a need to make changes due to the attitudes of early Commissioners in dictating to Ministers, the power they held and structure of the act (e.g. a Commissioner could only be dismissed by a two thirds majority vote of both houses of Parliament. This is no longer the case as the commissioner is now on contract.)	Basis of the internal review Commissioner's powers
117	Says that Commissioners have changed over time. Commissioner John Shaw got upset with Ministers. These days that is not appropriate – you work with them.	Change in attitudes
124	In 1978 applied and became Deputy Commissioner of the DMR. Became Acting Commissioner when Brian Sexton died. Loder was ninth commissioner and four of his predecessors had died in office. It was presumed Loder would take on the Commissioner's job but it was not certain, due to a forthcoming state election. Loder returned from Harvard. The Minister retired at the election and when the government was returned Loder had to wait for his appointment for up to twelve months during a process of calling for applications.	Loder becomes Deputy Commissioner, then Acting Commissioner Brian Sexton

156	Talks about the time during the 1980s when, as Acting Commissioner the Department of Transport successfully merged with the Department of Main Roads. The merger had been progressing for quite some time and the first part had occurred while Loder was in Wollongong. Because of funding, traffic control and traffic lights were with the Department of Motor Transport and DMR provided the infrastructure, but had to get funding approval from the Dept of Transport. While this process worked well, the problem was that DMR staff thought in terms of building roads, not traffic control, so that DMR designs were not always the best.	1980s merger of Department of Main Roads and the Department of Transport.
180	The problems did not come to light until at Wollongong where DMR took over the entire road program, including traffic lights. It was discovered that better solutions were found because Transport people were working on design and instead of rebuilding an intersection, traffic control was used to streamline traffic flows.	Solutions
194	Says he resisted the merger it during his time as Commissioner. When he retired, DMR took over the revenue raising side. Loder had opposed the move because it became he saw it would become the major function of the Roads and Traffic Authority. Now more staff are involved in revenue than road building as money is always given the number one priority. Felt it was the wrong tack because the DMR should be there to provide, maintain and operate roads, not raise money. It has also changed the public perception of the department as a friend of the people, providing better roads. Believes that the RTA's predominant role is a taxing, revenue raising and regulatory authority and has lost the mission.	Roads and Traffic Authority

223	Says that the change in Department's direction was not a factor in his early retirement. Neville Wran introduced a rule that all heads of department had to retire at age 60. An extension was possible with the minister's support and Minister Brereton offered to give his support. However, due to his long career with the DMR he was not inclined to implement the kind of changes required.	Early retirement
247	Looks back on his time as Commissioner as a period of great enjoyment. Says his career was spent during the golden days of the Department. He went from an ordinary department person to a position of great power as supreme commander. He had to watch what he said. A casual remark about an idea could result in implementation. The loss of power on retirement was briefly deflating.	Looking back on his career
282	Talks about achievements during time as Commissioner, including the revision of the Main Roads Act, the Sydney Harbour Tunnel and random breath testing in the face of much political opposition. Several well publicised bad drink related accidents brought the press and community out against drink driving. Social attitudes changed in a matter of a few weeks from people feeling that their rights were being infringed to drink drivers being regarded as social outcasts. Booze buses rammed the message home. Testing was well accepted and attracted no flak. A distinct drop in road accidents took place.	Achievements – random breath testing
342	Says that he spent five years as Commissioner from 1981 to 1986. Leading up to the 1988 Bicentennial, the Federal Government introduced a road construction program and changed funding to provide dedicated petrol tax and more money was poured into roads than any time previously. Work was done on the Hume Highway, the road to Newcastle, the Hornsby Bypass. There was such a massive increase in funding that the states could not spend the money. In NSW the money was spent and they actually got more than their share.	Bicentennial road building projects

401	Relates that the Federal Government and NSW State Government argued about the location of the national highway between Sydney and Newcastle. The Department wanted it located to the east of Lake Macquarie and the Federal Government to the west. Federal Minister of Transport Peter Morris lived at Newcastle. A DMR employee in Newcastle called Arvo Tinni knew Peter Morris. Loder was keen to spend the money and moved Arvo Tinni from Newcastle to Goulburn to organise roads in that area, but Minister Morris thought he had been moved so that the State Government could get their way on the eastern road on Lake Macquarie. He was later reassured that this was not the case.	Sydney-Newcastle Freeway Federal Minister of Transport Peter Morris Arvo Tinni
437	End of Tape IEA SYD: FH38 - Side B	

Tape: IEA SYD: FH39 Side A

000	Start Tape IEA Sydney FH39 - side A	
005	Talks about the truck drivers' road blockades. On a previous occasion hundreds of semi-trailers blocked traffic on the Hume Highway between Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne and won a political point. Some time later another was planned north of the Peats Ferry Bridge, stopping traffic between Sydney and Newcastle. Premier Wran asked Loder to send bulldozers to the Peats Ferry Bridge and warned blockade organisers he would use the bulldozers to push their vehicles off the road. The demonstration was called off. Loder could not remember the reason for the blockade.	Truckies' road blockade
040	Talks about Newcastle train drivers who refused to haul export coal from Newcastle to port. The government requested DMR to assist with road haulage. Current truck weight load limits prevented assistance and so a temporary overloading was permitted and the strike averted.	Newcastle train drivers strike

054	<p>Agreed with Wran's stance to keep the highway open during the Peats Ferry Bridge blockade. In his opinion, Wran was a good Premier who ironically came in on an anti-road platform, but did more roadwork and freeway work than any other. By the time Loder resigned all Harbour Tunnel negotiations and planning had been concluded. Met Wran at a class reunion and gave Wran the credit for the Tunnel. Loder signed the initial Transfield Tunnel contract. During that time met Franco Belgiorno Nettis, an interesting character.</p>	<p>Neville Wran</p> <p>Franco Belgiorno Nettis</p>
112	<p>Says that early in his retirement he was active in promoting toll roads – not so much private toll roads. Had attempted to organise them within the Department and was behind special legislation to have tolls from the Newcastle road maintained after it was paid for, and used for road improvements in the area – an idea subsequently wiped by the Greiner government. As a retired commissioner he found it difficult to get the ear of government and so contacted the influential Jim Abignano from the contracting company of the same name and was referred to Alan Livingstone. Together they put forward a paper for submission to government. Feels sure it led to the M4, M5 and M2 tollways and airport tunnel. Loder's proposal was the roads be built as government toll roads and money used to operate and maintain the roads. Agrees with the idea of toll roads and says it does not matter whether run publicly or privately, though his preference is for public ownership and operation. This option was not possible at the time due to loan council complications which don't exist today. Says the theory of tolls is that money is saved through less travel time and so benefits users.</p>	<p>Since retirement</p> <p>Toll roads</p> <p>Jim Abignano</p> <p>Alan Livingstone</p>
168	<p>Says private toll roads present no benefits to government, although road users benefit through cheaper travel. The tolled section of roads have uncongested travel and so provide a benefit to those whose time is more valuable. Savings in vehicle operation offset toll charges.</p>	<p>Benefits of toll roads</p>

192	Says DMR changed to RTA after he retired and agrees that it now functions very differently from the DMR. Thinks changes have gone too far. As Commissioner he was moving the Department away from "day labour" to contract – a more economical option. Problem with government operation is the "machinery" of operation rather than the people. Says previously tolls would be lifted when work paid for. In the case of the Harbour Bridge the toll was not lifted, as the money was used to pay for the Warringah Freeway, the Cahill Expressway and the Sydney Harbour Tunnel.	Change from DMR to RTA Toll charges
224	Talks about being a Director of State Wide Roads, a toll road company. Alan Livingstone and others invited Loder to help them. Loder went into it with the job as a primary consideration rather than the money. Says toll roads are not especially lucrative. The M4 has been a profitable road, but the money was made in the initial construction and put back in and now returned good money for that investment. The M5 is struggling and will improve. The M2, the only tollway listed on the stock exchange, is selling their one dollar shares at over four dollars. Thinks they are grossly overpriced. Has forty years to run but doubts it will prove a good investment for investors.	Director, State Wide Roads M2, M4, M5 Freeways
264	Was National President of the Australian Road Federation until end of 1998. Relinquished the position, due to unfamiliarity with current politicians. Highlights of his presidency included the capacity to keep in touch with development of roads and being instrumental in getting the Federal Government to contribute towards to the Pacific Highway. Met with Federal Minister Laurie Brereton who agreed to meet because of past acquaintance. Loder mentioned his views on toll roads and that not all are suitable for tolls and discussed proposal to build a toll road instead of the Pacific Highway and why it was wrong. Brereton asked for a paper on the subject which was duly sent. Shortly afterwards it was announced that the Pacific Highway would be improved.	National President, Australian Road Federation and highlights

319	Says national membership of the Australian Road Federation comprises companies – there are levels of membership. The major council is composed of big companies for example, Shell, Caterpillar, Boral and suppliers of road making materials and contractors. There are other members who do not vote on council and state members which are small companies.	Membership of the Australian Road Federation
336	Says he has enjoyed all aspects of his career and being Commissioner was the highlight. Early days as a works engineer were good – out in the air and hands on. Regards the Harbour Tunnel as his biggest career achievement. Had no career disappointments, but personal disappointments included losing his brother and lack of appreciation of his mother. Given the time he's had for reflection, especially with his involvement with the Australian Road Federation, feels he could have achieved more as Commissioner – starting again with the same knowledge he could do a better job.	Career highlights Achievements Disappointments
416	Talks about air pollution and roads. Says roads contribute positively to our lifestyle and there would be less scope for enjoyment without the motor vehicle. The better the road, the less negative the environmental effect. Says public transport includes taxis and trucks. We should improve the internal combustion engine and improve our roads. Feels he has made a positive contribution for the good of the world.	Environment
460	Tape IEA SYD: FH39, Side A ends End of interview with Bruce Loder	